



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREE SENTENCED FOR ROLE METH, MONEY LAUNDERING CONSPIRACIES INVOLVING 21 CO-DEFENDANTS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that three co-defendants were sentenced in federal court today for their roles in two conspiracies involving methamphetamine and money laundering.

Matthew S. Stewart, 28, and **Laurie J. Pazienza**, 25, whose addresses are unknown, and **Elizabeth Ann Corley**, 24, of Kissimmee, Fla., were sentenced by U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright today for their role in related conspiracies to launder money and distribute methamphetamine.

Stewart was sentenced to 10 years in federal prison without parole, **Pazienza** was sentenced to one year and one day in federal prison without parole, and **Corley** was sentenced to probation. Each of the co-defendants also was ordered to forfeit their interest in proceeds derived as a result of their involvement in the conspiracies, Graves said.

On Jan. 18 and Feb. 2, 2005, respectively, **Pazienza** and **Stewart** both pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004.

On Feb. 2, 2005, **Corley**, pleaded guilty to her role in a money laundering conspiracy. By pleading guilty, she admitted to conspiring to launder money between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004. **Corley** admitted that she conspired to launder funds generated by the distribution of methamphetamine to promote the continued distribution of methamphetamine and disguise the ownership of the proceeds, Graves said.

Two other co-defendants also have been sentenced in this case.

On July 20, 2005, **Casey L. McElroy**, 34, Excelsior Springs, Mo., was sentenced to six

years in federal prison without parole and ordered to forfeit any proceeds derived as a result of the methamphetamine conspiracy, including approximately \$1 million and property located in Corona, Calif. **McElroy** pleaded guilty on Jan. 21, 2005, to conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004, and also pleaded guilty to his role in the conspiracy to launder money between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004.

On May 17, 2005, **Matthew G. Stansbury**, 26, of Independence, was sentenced to 10 years in federal prison without parole. **Stansbury** pleaded guilty on Nov. 23, 2004, to conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004. The court also ordered **Stansbury** to forfeit any proceeds derived as a result of the methamphetamine conspiracy, including his interested in approximately \$1 million and property located in Corona, Calif.

Additionally, 17 other co-defendants also have pleaded guilty to their role in the two conspiracies to distribute methamphetamine and launder funds generated by the distribution of methamphetamine.

Christopher L. Earley, 27, **Matthew R. Klussman**, 29, **Jason M. Butler**, 30, **Guy A. Girratono**, 28, **Rickie T. Atagi**, 34, and **Joshua L. Drummond**, 26, all of Independence, Mo., **Ronald Wayne Younger**, 34, and **Garrett L. Johnson**, 41, both of Blue Springs, Mo., and **Spencer La Key**, 26, of Kansas City, Mo., and **Timothy A. Gorman**, 26, of Sugar Creek, Mo., each pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004.

Additionally, out-of-state residents **Ivan M. Tofiga**, 31, of Corona, Calif., **Juan Ramon Perez**, 30, of Glendora, Calif., and **Peti Nofogia Iosua**, 39, who is incarcerated by the Florida Department of Corrections, also pleaded guilty to their role in the methamphetamine conspiracy.

By pleading guilty to the methamphetamine conspiracy, **Tofiga**, **Perez**, **Iosua**, **Younger**, **Key**, **Girratono**, **Gorman**, **Johnson**, **Earley**, **Drummond**, **Klussman**, **Atagi** and **Butler** also agreed to a forfeiture count of the federal indictment, agreeing to forfeit any proceeds derived as a result of the methamphetamine conspiracy, including approximately \$1 million and property located in Corona, Calif.

Tofiga, **Perez**, **Noel Joseph Cruz**, 30, of Duarte, Calif., **Janet Castillo Martinez**, 31, of San Diego, Calif., and **Iosua**, **Younger**, and **Johnson**, pleaded guilty to their role in a money laundering conspiracy. By pleading guilty, they admitted to conspiring to launder money between Dec. 1, 2000, and April 22, 2004.

By pleading guilty to the money laundering conspiracy, **Tofiga**, **Perez**, **Cruz**, **Iosua**, **Younger**, **Johnson** and **Corley** agreed to a second forfeiture count of the federal indictment, agreeing to forfeit any proceeds derived as a result of their involvement in the money laundering conspiracy.

Jason C. Highley, 26, pleaded guilty to a superseding information, admitting that he

maintained a place of residence for the purpose of distributing, using and manufacturing methamphetamine.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael S. Oliver. It was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the Independence, Mo., Police Department, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Corona, Calif., Police Department and the California Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow